THE
NATION

FEBRUARY 28, 1959 . . 25c

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FOUR MYTHS CRIPPLE OUR SCHOOLS

A Frontal Attack on the Local-Control System

by Myron Lieberman

The Credit-Card Millionaires

by Richard Schickel

200,000 New Yorkers Can't Vote

by Dan Wakefield

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LETTERS

The Negro Novelist

Dear Sirs: Richard Gibson's recent review [*The Nation*, Feb. 7] of my book, *The Negro Novel in America*, can best be described as fanciful, and I therefore feel compelled to separate fancy from fact.

Fancy: "Fundamentally Mr. Bone is out to prove that the use of so-called 'white' material by Negro authors is a very bad thing."

Fact: "It is indefensible to regard race material as the only 'natural' province of the Negro writer. . . . The right of the Negro author to any material which he finds promising is beyond dispute." (pp. 223-24)

Fancy: (The following is another quotation from Mr. Gibson; it is not enclosed in quotation marks because I wish to reproduce his punctuation exactly.)

> The earliest period of the Negro novel, he asserts, produced a sort of "high-yallah" literature in which predominantly middle-class mulatto writers sought to break through the caste barrier on the "grounds that 'whiteness' of appearance and behavior entitled them to special treatment."

Fact: The second quotation is mine; the first ("high-yallah") is Mr. Gibson's. Surely Mr. Gibson is aware that the term is offensive in some quarters? I therefore prefer that he take sole responsibility for it. . . .

Fancy: "Schuyler's novel, probably the finest satire ever written by a Negro author, might have qualified as 'good,' Bone indicates, if the author's vision had not been animated basically by the demon of assimilationism."

Fact: Absolutely false. I challenge Mr. Gibson to point out the passage where I made such a statement. I have tried throughout to maintain the most scrupulous distinction between social and literary judgments, a distinction which Mr. Gibson obviously fails to grasp.

Fancy: "The fourth period . . . fell into the most horrendous assimilationism with Willard Motley's *Knock on Any Door* (1947) and Ann Petry's *Country Place* (1947)."

Fact: "A more successful portrayal of white life than either of Motley's novels, Ann Petry's *Country Place* (1947) is in fact one of the finest novels of the period." (p. 180)

My treatment of *Country Place* is a major source of embarrassment to Mr. Gibson, who is out to prove that I am against the use of white material by Negro authors. . . .

Mr. Gibson concludes his review with a devastating judgment: "If we must have a special history devoted to Negro novelists, then Carl Milton Hughes' *The Negro Novelist* (1953), despite its arid academicism, still remains the best."

Unfortunately, Mr. Gibson cannot have examined Mr. Hughes' book very closely. Had he done so, he would have discovered that it is a literary history which covers *exactly ten years* (1940-50), while my book covers a century (1853-1952). In fact, if Mr. Gibson had even the most superficial knowledge of the field, he would have known that Mr. Hughes' book is in effect a sequel to Dr. Hugh Gloster's *Negro Voices in American Fiction* (University of North Carolina Press, 1948). This volume comes down to 1940 where Mr. Hughes begins, and is by far the better book.

ROBERT A. BONE
Yale University

New Haven, Conn.

Dear Sirs: Fact and fancy are hopelessly entangled in Mr. Bone's mind. . . . While piously granting the Negro author the right to all material, however "white," he states quite explicitly: "In general, the Negro author should not undertake a 'white' novel unless his experience of white life is extraordinary. . . . The color line must be crossed in life before it can be crossed in literature." (pp. 224-25)

As for the use of the term "high-yallah," it is indeed mine and I take full responsibility for it. Mr. Bone's white skin is obviously more sensitive than my brown one. . . .

Mr. Bone is very unfair in his treatment of Schuyler and very contradictory. He lists *Black No More* as "mediocre." then says (p. 89) that satire during the Negro Renaissance "reaches its highest development" with Schuyler's book. On the next page (p. 90), he tells us: "Schuyler possessed a ready wit and an authentic gift for satire." On the next page (p. 91), he says that "assimilationism is the key to his (Schuyler's) satirical bent." He adds: "George Schuyler's writings provide, in fact, a classic study in assimilationism. In one of his early columns he vehemently attacks 'the lie that Negroes wish to be white'; yet he based *Black No More* on this very conception. His attack on Negro nationalism, whether of the Garvey or DuBois variety, runs true to form." Mr. Bone boasts about his ability to distinguish between aesthetic and social judgment, but in the three pages he devotes to Schuyler's book, there is not a single line of real literary criticism, only far-fetched statements about the demon of assimilationism.

I think I have made quite clear Mr. Bone's notions about Negro authors using "white" material. Why he suddenly decides Ann Petry's *Country Place* is a "superior" novel, I have no idea. Her far better book, *The Street*, he calls "mediocre."

Carl Milton Hughes' *The Negro Novelist*, I maintain, is a better study than Mr. Bone's. For one thing, Mr. Hughes

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The Nation, Feb. 28, 1959. Vol. 188, No. 9

The Nation, published weekly (except for omission of four summer issues) by The Nation Company and copyright 1959, in the U.S.A. by the Nation Associates, Inc., 333 Sixth Avenue, New York 14, N. Y. Second class postage paid at New York, N. Y.

Subscription Prices Domestic—One year $8, Two years $14, Three years $20. Additional postage per year, Foreign and Canadian $1.

Change of Address: Three weeks' notice is required for change of address, which cannot be made without the old address as well as the new.

Information to Libraries: The Nation is indexed in Readers Guide to Periodical Literature, Book Review Digest, Index to Labor Articles, Public Affairs, Information Service, Dramatic Index.

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NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1959
VOLUME 188, No. 9

THE NATION

EDITORIALS

Mr. Dulles

The Nation has had more critical than commendatory words for John Foster Dulles, but if we possessed an elixir which would cause his endocarcinoma to vanish overnight, it would be dispatched to his bedside as fast as to that of our dearest friend. Yet one must note the fact, neglected by most of the press, that as the Secretary's health deteriorated, his diplomacy improved. On January 13, with seeming casualness — but it is not Mr. Dulles' nature to do anything casually — he disavowed the stubborn formula which precluded any possible solution of the German problem: free elections, first—otherwise no reunification. The principle was retained, but it ceased to be a prerequisite. This introduced some flexibility into the situation. The Secretary was, of course, perfectly aware that neither West Germany nor the West German Government was united behind Chancellor Adenauer's intransigence on all matters pertaining to the Soviet Union. Mr. Dulles followed up this maneuver with one of equal significance and in the same direction. On his recent trip to Europe, he persuaded the Chancellor to relinquish all claims to the Polish-held territories of Silesia and Pomerania, provided the Soviet Union would consent to a German reunification plan acceptable to the West. But Soviet consent cannot be obtained if the plan involves nuclear armaments for the Bonn army, as both Mr. Dulles and Mr. Adenauer know full well. A third concession is therefore implied, and this leads to a fourth: if West Germany is deprived of the means for future aggression, then some version of the Rapacki plan (but let it be called by any other name) would not redound to the disadvantage of the West. But the concessions will be bilateral. On the Soviet side, a pill as bitter as all these four combined must be swallowed: the merger of East and West Germany under the dominance of West Germany — as indeed it must be, both on the basis of population potential and the inclination of most Germans.

Thus Mr. Dulles himself, before the recurrence of his cancer became apparent, had cut the ground from under the shoot-our-way-into-Berlin fanatics. On this note of triumph, he should be content to retire. It would be humiliating to have to confess that there are "irreplaceable" men in a democratic system of government, for it is based on a fantasy which should never have been allowed to gain credence. The weaknesses in Mr. Dulles' brand of one-man diplomacy were never more apparent than in the last week; we need not, and should not, return to any such conception of statesmanship. Mr. Dulles can be replaced; and, of course, sooner or later he will be.

Bipartisanship: the Mansfield Version

Responsible bipartisanship in peacetime foreign policy, as Dr. Cecil V. Crabb, Jr., pointed out in last week's *Nation*, is not concurrence in manifest error, but independent collaboration in an effort to find a solution to the nation's predicaments abroad. A good example is Senator Mike Mansfield's February 12 statement on the German question. It is creative both in the mechanics of its presentation and in the ideas presented.

The ideas are noteworthy not only in their specific content, but in the general approach, which coincides broadly with the views of Senator Fulbright and with the new Dulles approach. Up to a few weeks ago, Mr. Dulles' attitude was almost totally polarized: we were the embodiment of virtue and the Russians were the embodiment of evil. Now the Secretary appears to be adjusting himself to diplomacy in the real world, in which we share the frailties of humanity. Senator Mansfield likewise sees the conflict not in terms of blackest black and purest white, but in half-tones. Maybe most of the virtue is on our side, but: "There are differing economic and social structures functioning in Western and Eastern Germany. . . . How are these structures to be fused in peace?" This makes practical, negotiable sense, in contrast to the sterility of the earlier Dulles-Adenauer pretensions.

As to the mechanics, Senator Mansfield did not clear his speech with the State Department; he merely sent the department a copy a day before he delivered it. In thus making clear that he was not acting as a rubber

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stamp for the Executive, he won a better hearing for his own ideas and, in the process, helped Mr. Dulles free himself from what remains of the strait jacket into which the Secretary had pinned himself and his collaborators. There was, also, a refreshing modesty about the manner in which Senator Mansfield offered his proposals. He said that his ideas might not be the best that could be conceived; their purpose was merely to stimulate fresh thinking and to encourage a new and more imaginative approach. He has already succeeded in this limited aim but, more important, he has pointed the way to a new concept of bipartisanship.

Cost-Plus Tuition

From California to Connecticut, the editorial pages of campus dailies are buzzing with comment on pending and proposed increases in tuition fees. The facts vary widely from college to college, but a clear national pattern emerges. Tuition charges are going up and the increases have come in rapid succession. For example, at Cornell they have been hiked for the third time in four years. In the last three years, Harvard students have been faced with two tuition, three board, and two room increases, whereas only two increases (and these restricted to tuition) had occurred at Harvard in the seven preceding years. As the student editors see it, the recent increases have little direct relation to fluctuations in the national economy. It is conceded that a "gradual inflation" has taken place, but this general inflation correlates imperfectly, if at all, with the succession of tuition increases of the last few years. In effect, the college student views increased tuition costs in much the same light as the consumer views price rises stemming from the wage-price spiral; i.e., costs have been hiked in excess of the actual increase in operating costs. And the student is right. College administrators, with full realization that legislative bodies are reluctant to vote more funds for education and with an eye to future cost increases, are naturally tempted to fix tuition fees at a figure that will make it possible to maintain, or even decrease, present deficits. In a word, tuition fees are being fixed on a cost-plus basis — in anticipation of future fiscal needs and contingencies. The college administrators are well aware that the post-Sputnik fervor about education has abated; with surprising rapidity we have reverted to our normal stance — high verbal dedication to education and an extreme reluctance to foot the bill. In this issue (p. 179), Myron Lieberman offers a compelling demonstration that our inefficient and outmoded system of local control severely limits the expansion of American public education to meet modern needs. His basic conclusions are also applicable in the higher reaches of education. The problem currently agitating college editors and their readers will never be satisfactorily solved until we substitute a centralized direction of subsidies and scholarship funds, or some combination of both, for the present efforts to force students to carry a disproportionate — and ultimately insupportable—share of the soaring costs of college education.

Agenda at San Juan

Reports of the recent AFL-CIO Executive Council sessions at the Caribe Hilton in San Juan, Puerto Rico, suggest that the problem of corruption still haunts the federation despite the well-publicized expulsions and banishments. Of serious concern to the council was the continued exploitation of Puerto Rican workers in New York through corrupt "sweetheart" contracts negotiated by unions which are still very much a part of the federation. Of equal concern was the matter of readmitting the International Longshoremen's Association which, in the view of some council members, must be readmitted, and soon, if only to keep it from federating with the ostracized Teamsters. While the council was in session an incident occurred which emphasized the futility of continuing to keep the I.L.A. "in outer darkness." To provide a haven for longshoremen who were supposed to be yearning for a chance to desert their tainted union, the AFL-CIO some time ago established a new union, the International Brotherhood of Longshoremen. Today its only extant local is to be found in Puerto Rico, and its officials were openly conferring — worse, cooperating — with officials of the Teamsters while the Executive Council was in session. A third concern was related to the vexing problem of Maurice A. Hutcheson, indicted president of the powerful Carpenters' Union, for whose expulsion Mr. Meany has consistently shown less enthusiasm than he did for the expulsion of the Teamsters on much the same charges.

In brief, it would be fair to conclude that the San Juan sessions revealed a marked abatement of the council's original confidence that expulsion would serve as a sovereign remedy for corruption. Disowning the erring son may enhance the father's sense of rectitude, but no more in union than in parental relations does it serve to reform the delinquent or strengthen the family. (See: editorial comment, *The Nation*, October 19, 1957; November 16, 1957).

Segregationist Drivel

The Southern segregationists continue to be hard-pressed on the ideological front. They made little enough sense at the beginning, what with the attacks on the Supreme Court, the spurious interpretations of the 14th Amendment, and the resurrected image of states' rights. Now, in desperation, they have turned to the old reliable witch hunt. Governor Marvin of Georgia is chairman of a commission which has discovered "a master-

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plan, Soviet inspired, behind the racial incidents so widespread in America today." Representative Dale Alford, the successful stick-in candidate of Little Rock, has echoed the same charge, while in Tennessee the indomitable Myles Horton and his gallant staff at Highlander Folk School are being "investigated" by a state legislative committee. But this latest drivel will not aid the segregationists in their effort to find a plausible ideology. It is a little too much to ask the nation to believe that the 14th Amendment was drafted in the Kremlin or that the Supreme Court has been infiltrated by alumni of Highlander. And it will doubtless occur to many people that the spectacle of Warren high school in Front Royal, Virginia, boycotted by a thousand white pupils as reprisal for the admission of twenty Negroes, is a prime example of subversion—engineered and inspired by Southern segregationists.

Lorenzo With a Difference

The Ford Foundation has announced awards totaling $150,000 to be distributed among eleven novelists and poets. The grants are intended to stimulate the artists "at a stage in their careers when time to concentrate on their talents gives promise of major contributions to their own artistic development and to contemporary American art."

Truly the corporate foundation is the Lorenzo of our day, but it is Lorenzo with a difference. The word "promise" in the announcement carries odd overtones in connection with a list of eleven names, ten of which are solidly established in the literary history of our time. These are all splendid writers, they will put the money to good use and we are delighted that they have received it.

But this distribution was not made to nourish talent; these talents flourish and have flourished in some cases for decades. It was made to give foundation administrators dreamless nights. Patronage of the arts, as any Lorenzo knows, is a wasteful business; if a third of his proteges turn out well, a man may consider himself a genius at the art of spending his money. But a foundation is run like a business and it does not tolerate waste: the Ford Foundation wants no Edsels to chill the atmosphere of the next directors' meeting. So this $150,000 is spent not to encourage talent but to reward success. It is generous, it is safe, it adds not a cubit to the cultural stature of our day.

Four Myths Cripple Our Schools . . *Myron Lieberman*

Like most editorial offices, The Nation *has been inundated with manuscripts on American education. Herewith we present a frontal attack by a distinguished educator on the built-in limitations of local control. It is the most instructive analysis of the weaknesses of our public-school system that we have seen. Mr. Lieberman teaches at the Graduate School of Education in New York's Yeshiva University, and is the author of* Education as a Profession. *This article, and another by him which will appear in* The Nation, *are adapted from the manuscript of a new book he is now writing.*

—The Editors

THE MOST important educational trend in the 1960s is likely to be the decline of local control of education. Such a development is long overdue. Public education in the United States has been strangled for more than a century by the myth that local control is a good thing. National survival now requires educational policies and programs which are not subject to local veto; conversely, local communities must be relegated to ceremonial rather than policy-making roles in public education. This means that in the long run we shall be forced also to abolish state control of education, since from a national standpoint state control is only an attenuated version of local control.

Our present system cannot be justified in the light of the mobile and interdependent nature of our society. A vast majority of our people eventually move away from the school district and state which carried the responsibility for their elementary and secondary education. In the year ending March, 1958, 30,800,000 Americans changed their residence. Approximately 11,000,000 moved from one county to another, of whom about half moved to a different state. Thus, on the average, every American moves to a different state two times during his life. Under these circumstances, it hardly makes sense to contend that the citizens of one state have no legitimate right to insist upon an adequate education for the children in other states.

Some idea of the bankruptcy of local control of education may be gotten from the statistics concerning Selective Service registrants rejected for failure to pass the mental tests. In 1956, the lowest rate of rejection on this score was Montana's 2.5 per cent; the highest rate was Mississippi's 44.9 per cent. In ten states, fewer than one out of every twenty registrants failed to pass the tests; in eleven states, one or more out of every four failed to pass.

These vast differences are not due solely to the differences in the school systems from state to state. A registrant educated in Montana might take his Selective Service tests in Mississippi, or vice versa. Moreover, the statistics include failures to pass the tests because of inherited mental deficiency, and for other causes over which the schools have no control. Nevertheless, the differences cannot

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be explained solely by non-educational causes. And because some states and communities provide a decent minimum education for only a small minority of their children, we must, in all states, draft persons who ought not to be in the armed services at all.

This is only a small part of the price we are paying for local control of education. The intellectual smog that has prevented us from realizing just how exorbitant is this price is being cleared away once and for all by such related events as the riots in Little Rock and the Russian conquests of space.

MUCH LIKE racial segregation, local control of education is based upon myths whose sun has now set. Particular individuals may continue to accept them for a long time, but our society would be committing suicide by doing so. The most important of the myths are these:

1. *The myth that local control of education, with perhaps a few concessions made to state control, is one of the important institutional safeguards of educational freedom and of our free society.*

Our present system of local control is far more conducive to totalitarian education and to a totalitarian society than a national system of schools would be. I know that this statement is not acceptable to the overwhelming majority of the American people, including the teachers; but I am willing to stand upon it.

The assertion that our present system tends toward totalitarianism seems absurd on its face. A totalitarian system is one which develops a massive uniformity of outlook; it is based upon intellectual protectionism for points of view which cannot stand the test of free discussion. But we have a multitude of schools of all denominations or no denominations at all; among our teachers and students are adherents of every major political, economic and religious point of view. What could be farther from totalitarianism?

In most states, the purposes and the content of education are left to local school boards to determine. Undoubtedly, there are constitutional limits to the purposes for which communities may operate public schools. However, these limits have never been spelled out, and great latitude is left to communities. Under these circumstances the predominant groups in each community tend to set educational goals which accord with their particular religious, political, economic or social points of view. As a practical matter, therefore, our present system results in the same kind of intellectual protectionism that characterizes schools in totalitarian countries.

Even where a community accepts the most liberal educational purposes, its interpretation of what programs fulfill these purposes may have the same stultifying effect as outright adherence to a sectarian purpose. Every pressure group is for the general welfare, but each has its own version of what measures do in fact promote the general welfare. Similarly, every pressure group is for a liberal education, but each has a special version of what educational programs lead to this result.

What is crucial is that at the local level, it is relatively easy for a preponderant group to enforce a policy of intellectual protectionism for its sacred cows. Thus the white majorities in Southern communities exclude instruction that is critical of racial segregation. Communities in which fundamentalist sects predominate exclude school instruction in evolution. Some communities have prohibited the study of the U.N. or of UNESCO. Ours is a heterogeneous country, but in most communities the predominant racial, religious, economic or political groups are able to veto whatever in the school program displeases them.

Looking at our system as a whole, and noting the existence of public schools teaching diverse doctrines, one might infer that our schools are free. We do not readily recognize the totalitarianism implicit in local control simply because not all schools protect the same dogmas. Nonetheless, a diversity of schools based upon intellectual protectionism for different dogmas does not constitute a "democratic school system" — not, at least, if "democratic" refers to the education actually provided rather than to the legal structure which facilitates a variety of one-sided educational programs.

THE diversity of our undemocratic schools is not the only factor which maintains the fiction that we have a democratic school system. The power structure of American society is such that no single group is able to enforce its dogmas on the population as a whole. No matter how successful a group may be in excluding certain facts and ideas from the public schools, the mass media — radio, TV, etc. — are almost certain to expose students to some of them. People look at this situation and say, "Our schools have kept us free." They should say. "Our freedoms have survived our schools."

2. *The myth that public education was not made a federal responsibility in the Constitution because the founding fathers feared the potentialities for dictatorship in a federal school system.*

Actually, education was not included as a federal function in the Constitution because the idea of free, public education had not even occurred to the founding fathers. At the time of the American Revolution, the concept of universal public education was receiving attention for the first time — and only from a few frontier thinkers. Thus, our present decentralized school system was not an inspired stroke of genius, but a historical accident.

Our schools have never been an important foundation of our free society. Our freedom is partly due to a separation of powers which enables us to transact public business reasonably well while simultaneously avoiding excessive subjection to government officials. Perhaps for this reason, we tend to regard the diffusion of power over our schools as an essential element of our free society. But adherence to a general principle that we must avoid excessive concentration of power does not automatically justify every separation or diffusion of it. Everything depends upon the circumstances — what powers are involved, who is to wield them, and so on. It is preposterous to think, merely because their political genius was expressed through a

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Constitution embodying a remarkably successful separation of powers, that the founding fathers would align themselves today with the supporters of local control of education.

People tend to regard public education as a legal concept and to neglect it as an educational concept; that is why they are seldom aware of its non-public aspects. The ideal of public education means more than having some governmental unit — local, state or federal — provide the funds. Public education has a referent in the quality of education as well as in its financial basis. The qualitative referent is an education in which the search for truth is carried on regardless of what empires topple, interests collapse or heads roll. Without this, public education is a delusion as dangerous as the notion that mere government ownership of the means of production will automatically result in their operation for public, rather than for private, interests. The socialization of a service at any level of government is no automatic guarantee that the service will be performed in the public interest.

ALTHOUGH the legal structure under which schools operate is only one factor which serves to shape their educational program, it is an extremely important factor. Because a national system of educational controls is more likely to broaden the purposes of education and to preserve the professional autonomy of teachers, it is much more likely to provide a truly liberal education than a multitude of totalitarian systems under local control. It is a striking fact that in England, which has a national system of education, teachers are opposed to local control precisely because they fear that such control would undermine their academic freedom. Meanwhile, teachers in the United States continue to act as if local control must be maintained inviolate lest academic freedom (which they do not possess) be imperiled.

3. The myth that local control of education is a boon to educational research and experimentation.

We have forty-nine state school systems, each free to try something

different. Each state has delegated considerable power to local school boards, which multiplies the experimental possibilities. This is supposed to make for progress, since each school system is not only free to try something new, but also to benefit from the experience of others.

There is no doubt that some change for the better occurs this way. Nevertheless, the enormous decentralization cannot be justified on this ground. The different schools do not constitute experiments except in the loosest sense of the word. They do not operate under conditions carefully controlled for purposes of analysis and comparison; they just operate.

Much of the experience of different systems is valuable only on the premise that education should be a state or local responsibility. A school board may indeed be interested in how another community put over a school-bond campaign. However, if the funds came from the federal government, the experience of a particular school system in raising money would be academic.

The truth is that local control of education has obstructed rather than facilitated educational research. By and large, only large, urban systems allocate funds to research — and when they do so, the research is generally limited to problems of local concern. This is only natural. No one normally looks to a local farm community to finance a program of basic agricultural research; why should we expect local communities to support educational research in local schools from local funds? In agriculture, the federal government supports basic research because the futility of waiting for a small operator or a local community to do so is clearly evident. The same policy can and should be followed in education.

The U.S. Office of Education, a branch of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, has conducted research on certain administrative problems for many years. Not until 1956, however, was it granted funds for research in the art and science of teaching. In that year, $3,000,000 was made available by Congress for grants in various fields of education. The National Defense Education Act, passed in August, 1958, included an appropriation of $18,000,000 over a four-year period for research on the educational use of radio, television and audio-visual aids. But as long as education remains primarily a state and local responsibility, educational research will never receive the support it ought to have.

Public education is a $16,000,000,000 enterprise. Enlightened practice in large-scale industry and government is to spend 3 to 6 per cent of the total budget for research. In education, this would call for an expenditure of from $480,000,000 to $960,000,000 annually. In fact, it is doubtful whether we are spending more than $25,000,000 a year from all sources on educational research.

Proposals for a twenty-fold increase will be dismissed as a pipe dream by most educators. Nevertheless, such an increase might still leave research expenditures at a conservative level even if we are now

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spending considerably more than $25,000,000 annually for the purpose. We are currently spending well over $300,000,000 annually for medical research, and a distinguished advisory committee of medical educators and research executives last year recommended that this amount be increased to $1 billion by 1970.

IN THIS connection, one of the most persistent and most pathetic arguments against a national school system is that it would not permit experimentation. The broad assumption seems to be that centralized administration is necessarily non-experimental or that it necessarily insists upon uniformity down to every detail. Actually, several federal agencies subsidize programs of research which dwarf anything we have ever seen in education. The defense and agriculture departments illustrate the possibilities.

The present structure of American education, far from conducive to the support of research, is well designed to obstruct it. Consider, for instance, the scandalous lags which occur between the discovery and the application of knowledge in education. These lags are reflected in *what* is taught, as well as *how*. For example, one of the country's outstanding authorities on the teaching of mathematics recently pointed out that a seventeenth-century mathematician would feel perfectly at home teaching in an American high school. A similar comment has been made by an outstanding physicist about the physics curriculum in our secondary schools. Even in the area of methodology, there is overwhelming evidence that vast numbers of teachers adhere to methods and techniques which have long been discredited by reliable research.

4. *The myth that state governments and local school districts have the financial resources to support an adequate educational system.*

To grasp the fallacious nature of this proposition, first consider some of the practical problems involved in introducing basic educational changes which involve heavy expenditures. Let us assume a proposal that every student who has the ability to do college work be required to take two years of physics in high school. At this point, consider only the financial problems involved. If a school is to offer two years of physics instead of one or none, extensive remodeling will almost certainly be required, plus substantial expenditures for equipment and supplies. (Just how substantial is evident from a survey made in March, 1957, by the NEA's Research Division; more than half the schools responding to its inquiries did not even have direct current in their physics laboratories; the average total expenditure per pupil for supplies and consumable equipment in science classrooms was discovered to be exactly 57c.)

IN THIS connection, it is interesting to note that the National Defense Education Act passed in August, 1958, provided an appropriation of $300,000,000 over a four-year period for science equipment in high schools. But it should be obvious that this appropriation, welcome as it is, will only help to solve a small part of the problem. Before most high schools could offer two years of physics, local school boards would have to adopt salary schedules much more attractive than the prevailing ones. Even though physics is now offered for only one year in the overwhelming majority of schools where it is offered at all, there is already a large and growing shortage of physics teachers. It will be interesting to see how long it takes for Congress to recognize the futility of waiting for local school boards to institute salary schedules which are high enough to attract reasonably competent science teachers.

The preceding comments by no means exhaust the financial problems involved. To secure more and better physics teachers in high schools, we must first secure more and better physics teachers in colleges and universities already confronted by serious shortages. Indeed, these institutions are not even producing enough high school physics teachers to offer one year of competent instruction for all students who should take the subject.

UNDER OUR present system of financing education, the states and local communities supply over 95 per cent of funds for public education. There are several reasons why this structure is not working and can never be made to work. In the first place, some states have four to five times as much taxable wealth, on the average, as other states. The differences between school districts are even greater; some school districts have several hundred times as much taxable wealth as others. Ability to support education has also been studied in terms of what educators call "personal income payments per pupil enrolled," that is, by taking the total income received by the residents of a state and dividing this figure by the number of pupils enrolled in its public schools. In 1956-57, this ratio worked out to $17,432 in Delaware and $3,754 in Mississippi. Needless to say, the variations between school districts were even greater.

For many years, authorities on school finance have pointed out that the poorest states and school districts usually devote a higher proportion of their resources to education than do the wealthier ones. Theoretically, one might argue that this is not too important because all states and school districts should be making a greater effort to support education. However, this argument overlooks many basic factors.

One such consideration is the competitive aspects of state and local taxation. In New York City, there is a concentration of high incomes unequaled anywhere in the country. Nearly 20 per cent of all internal

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revenue is collected in New York State. Thus it would appear that New York City, which is permitted to levy an income tax but does not, and New York State, which does levy an income tax, could easily have the very best schools in the nation. The difficulty is, however, that many high-income persons and corporations might move if tax rates were raised substantially. This is why it is often fallacious to criticize states and communities for not raising taxes; if they did so, they would lose people and businesses to areas less concerned about education. The need for, and justice of, federal taxation would thus remain even if there were substantial equality in wealth and revenues among all states and school districts. The fact that a federal tax cannot be evaded at the expense of children in a particular school district is one of the most compelling reasons why we must move toward an educational system financed by the federal government.

Still another factor makes it very unlikely that an adequate educational system could be financed without massive federal support. School districts have been forced to raise most of their funds (54 per cent in 1953-54) by means of the property tax, the levying of which — unlike most other taxes — must usually be submitted to popular vote. As is usual in this type of situation, the people who are badly hurt by a substantial tax increase are more effective politically than the diffuse majority which benefits. The result is that an increasing number of bond issues for school funds are being defeated in communities sympathetic to public education. Here is some indication of the rising, and often justified, tide of resentment against such discriminatory taxation.

The need for federal support of public education, if not for a federal system, is also related to the way in which the federal government supports non-educational activities. In the new highway program, for example, the federal government will spend $9 for every dollar appropriated by the state governments. Obviously, this will result in a bigger share of the state dollar being spent on highways. Will this be at the expense of education? The only way that education can compete for funds, *even at the state level*, is for the federal government to assume a much bigger share of the educational budget.

INTELLECTUALLY, local control of education is already a corpse. The only question is how long these and other myths can prolong its zombie-like existence in a highly interdependent society. Somehow, we might just stagger through the last half of the twentieth century with an eighteenth-century educational structure. The indications are, however, that the practical sense of the American people will be forced to assert itself, and that they will develop a centralized school system while simultaneously reaffirming their faith that any such system is un-American.

200,000 NEW YORKERS CAN'T VOTE .. *Dan Wakefield*

THE FIRST stirs of protest are beginning over the plight of an estimated 150,000-200,000 U.S. citizens in New York City who are barred from the right to vote. This hefty bloc of lost voters, who could mean the strategic balance of power in city and even state elections, are U.S. citizens of Puerto Rican birth or parentage who are denied the vote by a thirty-seven-year-old amendment to the New York State constitution which requires that all electors be able to pass an English-literacy test.

Although there have been Puerto Ricans in New York City since the nineteenth century, and all Puerto Ricans were made U.S. citizens in 1917, the question of the state's English-literacy requirement (in effect since 1922) was never much discussed outside of Puerto Rican circles until last fall. Then José Camacho, a fifty-four-year-old Puerto Rican grocer in the Bronx, was denied the right to register for the November 4 election on grounds that he does not read or write English. Mr. Camacho, represented by a young Manhattan attorney, Gene Crescenzi, brought suit in the Bronx Supreme Court charging a violation of his civil rights. Justice Edgar J. Nathan, Jr., ruled against him, citing the state constitutional provision on English literacy. Crescenzi filed an appeal which is now pending.

No matter what the eventual outcome of this particular case, it has already raised a whole array of questions — legal, political and social — which have smoldered below the surface for a long time, and were never brought into open debate simply because no citizen literate only in Spanish had challenged the English-language requirement. In addition to the suit pending in the Court of Appeals, Crescenzi has also filed a complaint for his client with the federal Civil Rights Commission, which has begun an investigation of the whole problem and is scheduled to report in September. Last November, the New York Civil Liberties Union announced that it "has been investigating the civil-liberties issues involved in the question of whether Puerto Ricans who can read and write Spanish — but not English — should be able to vote in New York State."

THE question goes far beyond the New York political scene. There are more than 600,000 Puerto Ricans in New York City, but there are also approximately 200,000 scattered through the rest of the country. In some states, they are able to vote even if they are literate only in Span-

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ish. Mr. Crescenzi says that Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, California and Utah all have bilingual provisions in their voting law. In Pennsylvania (which has a growing Puerto Rican community in Philadelphia), Mr. Crescenzi says that in recognition of the problem, Puerto Ricans have been allowed to vote even when they do not speak English. In some states — New Jersey, for example — there is no literacy requirement of any kind for voting.

THE ISSUE involved in the situation of the Puerto Ricans is not, as many New Yorkers regard it, comparable — either legally or historically — to the issues involved in the immigration of Europeans to these shores. The Italians, Germans, Russians and other nationals who came here as immigrants and wanted to be citizens had to learn English as a requirement for citizenship, and were thus automatically qualified for any English-language voting requirement as soon as they were qualified as citizens. The Puerto Ricans, of course, are citizens to begin with, and their situation historically is much closer to that of the other Spanish-speaking peoples in the United States than to the European immigrants. The Puerto Ricans are actually a minority of the American-Spanish group; their own total population on the mainland is roughly 800,000, but there are an estimated four million Spanish-speaking people in the country of other origins, mostly Mexican. The bulk of these people are in the southwestern parts of the United States which were acquired by war or purchase, and where Spanish was the principal language when the treaties were signed that made them a part of the United States — a situation, in other words, comparable to that of Puerto Rico.

Attorney Crescenzi believes that the treaties signed with Mexico which gave the United States much of its southwestern territory resulted in the present provisions for Spanish-language voting rights in such states as New Mexico, Arizona and Texas. The treaties insured that the people in the territories acquired would be able to maintain full civil rights. In New Mexico, Mr. Crescenzi points out, it is still possible to get a full jury trial in Spanish (a point which has several times been raised in New York by lawyers claiming that a client who speaks only Spanish and cannot understand the proceedings and testimony in English is not getting a fair trial).

Mr. Crescenzi takes his argument back to the 1898 Treaty of Paris, which established the conditions for the United States annexation of Puerto Rico, and notes that the treaty gave the people of the island the right to choose English or Spanish as a language and provided that their civil rights would be determined by Congress, which in 1917 gave them full citizenship. Mr. Crescenzi then cites Article VI of the Constitution, which says that all treaties made by the United States shall be the supreme law of the land.

Some legal authorities with experience in the civil-rights field are of the opinion, however, that this argument does not have a great chance of success. Although we may take the idea for granted, there is no federal policy that citizenship insures the right to vote; the Constitution says that qualifications for electors are matters for determination by the individual states.

Whether or not the historical argument holds up to legal tests, it seems an enlightening consideration for those who so often compare the Puerto Rican situation with that of the European immigrations and forget that this country took Puerto Rico from Spain by means of war. It was, ironically enough, the year after Spain had finally (after more than 400 years) granted Puerto Rico a form of self-government that General Nelson Miles led U.S. troops onto the island to proclaim that he had brought "the advantages and blessings of enlightened civilization from the United States of America" and the island again was a colony without self-rule (and remained that way until it was allowed to elect its own governor in 1948).

WHAT seems possibly a more successful legal argument that Mr. Crescenzi is using is based on the 14th Amendment's assurance that a state cannot deprive a person of life, liberty or property, or make a differentiation or classification of people with respect to their enjoyment of rights, except on reasonable grounds. The question then becomes whether it is reasonable to deprive a person literate only in Spanish of voting in a state that is predominantly English-speaking. Literacy tests have been upheld as a voting qualification in past legal opinions, but they have mainly been justified as reasonable indications of intelligence. But for this purpose, why does the literacy have to be in English? The much-discussed question that follows is whether such a person can be well-informed about the issues. In answer to this, Puerto Ricans point out that New York has six Spanish-language radio stations, three Spanish daily newspapers, a Spanish television station and a number of Spanish magazines and periodicals.

Although it is a common argument

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of some observers that the English literacy test is "good for" the Puerto Ricans, on the grounds that it encourages them to learn English, it is hard to find any Puerto Ricans who go along with such a theory. José Monseratt, head of the New York Division of Migration of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico (an agency which does a major job in helping the Puerto Ricans adjust to mainland life, and sponsors free English courses both here and on the island) explained that, naturally, he was in favor of Puerto Ricans learning English, but that "Voting laws are not set up to encourage people to speak English."

"There is a whole disquiet in the Puerto Rican community here," Mr. Monseratt said, "a desire to be recognized which is felt to be tied up with politics. This desire to have a voice in it permeates the entire community — we've got to get into politics to get the kind of statutes which will not only help the Puerto Ricans, but the whole city as well. Also, Puerto Ricans feel that a real voice in politics will help in their total acceptance as a group."

The great interest in politics that most Puerto Ricans have, Mr. Monseratt said, is shown in the fact that voting turn-outs in elections on the island are among the highest in the world — usually over 80 per cent of the voting population. In New York, however, only 85,000 Puerto Ricans out of a potential of roughly 260,000 voted in the last election. Mr. Monseratt feels that many of those who did not vote are actually able to speak enough English, but are afraid of the literacy test. "There are a lot of misconceptions about it," he said. "Some people think it is an IQ test, and are embarrassed or afraid to take it."

"It is my personal opinion," Mr. Monseratt said, "that as many people as possible should have the right to vote — not just Puerto Ricans, but all citizens. The more who vote, the stronger the democracy."

José Ramos Lopez, new Democratic Assemblyman from Manhattan's heavily Puerto Rican East Harlem District (and the third Puerto Rican ever to hold elective office in New York State) feels strongly that Spanish-speaking people should be able to vote. He asks: "What difference should there be between Texas and New York?" As to the question of how voting would be handled in two languages, and the wording of propositions in Spanish, Mr. Lopez said: "That is purely an administrative problem — not an issue. These people are counted for their votes when it comes to Congressional representation, and then they can't vote. They have all the responsibilities — they don't have to be able to speak English to fight in the Army."

José Lumen Roman, who writes for the newspaper *El Diario* and conducts a daily TV program (*Aqui Se Habla Espanol*) for the teaching of English to Spanish-speaking people, holds similar views. Mr. Roman, who was defeated as a Liberal Party candidate for the New York City Council (no Puerto Rican has ever served on the council) says that "If Puerto Ricans can read and write in Spanish and understand the issues of a campaign, they should be allowed to vote. This law for English literacy can and should be amended — it was written before the great majority of Puerto Ricans came to New York."

THE PROSPECTS are that if any change is made, it will have to come through a state constitutional amendment rather than through the courts. On January 30, Felipe Torres, Democratic Assemblyman from the Bronx, introduced a bill which provides that any citizen who has served in the U.S. armed forces can present his honorable discharge papers in fulfillment of the literacy test. But even this modest bill (which the Puerto Ricans would welcome even though it would affect only a small number of people) is given little chance of passage; and a full change seems at present an unlikely prospect. In the words of one Puerto Rican active in city politics: "You want to know the real reason the law won't be changed? Because neither party's politicians want it. The Republicans figure that most of those 200,000 votes would be Democratic anyway. The Democrats figure that a bloc that big would have to mean more patronage for the Puerto Ricans — and others are in line ahead of us."

In the meantime, the Puerto Rican migration to the mainland is expected to continue at a steady rate — 50,000 new migrants are expected during 1959. The bloc of lost voters will continue to grow — and so will the resentment.

THE CREDIT-CARD MILLIONAIRES .. *Richard Schickel*

"I'VE BEEN afraid of this," says one Russian bureaucrat to another as an angry mob mills beneath their window. "The people want credit cards!"

This poignant vision of the Soviet future, as seen by *New Yorker* cartoonist Alan Dunn, may yet become a reality, especially if Nikita Khrushchev achieves his ambition of parity with the United States in the production of consumer goods. The men in the Kremlin might well ponder the experience of the United States in this respect, for it isn't difficult to imagine that once the material millenium comes to pass in the USSR, its people will do exactly what we Americans have been doing since the millenium came here — demand the democratization of conspicuous consumption, a process in which credit cards are extremely useful.

Within the recent memory of most Americans, the purchase of a new car was a great event, a thing that occurred, in most middle-class families, only every five years or so. I can still remember the general swelling of pride in our family when we

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bought our first refrigerator in the mid-thirties, and as a child I recall overhearing intense debates over the desirability of various methods of purchasing those capital goods which were, in a sense, luxurious variations on necessities. Things being what they are today, everyone seems to have a refrigerator, and a home freezer, too, and the arrival of the new car has become an annual event, like birthdays. The telephone company, having achieved total saturation of the market, is now telling us that extension phones, "in color, of course," are "a beautiful way to save steps."

In short, most of us have all the necessities we need, perhaps more than we need. So, because there is left-over money burning holes in so many pockets (even with personal savings at a record high) and because, if the economy is to continue its expansion, artificial wants must be created at an unprecedented rate, we are witnessing an awe-inspiring revolution in spending habits.

Luxury-spending and tax-dodging, once the more or less exclusive prerogatives of the classic *nouveau riche*, have been extended to two groups that, since 1929, couldn't afford it—the old rich and the burgeoning middle class. Only the very poor, a dwindling minority group of slackers who simply don't consume good, like Americans should, cannot indulge in this, the biggest fad of our history. (Even they, however, can afford the $2.50 solid-gold sewing needle, or the $2.95 brass belt buckle that cunningly incorporates a can opener, bottle opener and screwdriver—items which did very nicely in last year's Christmas trade.)

THERE are a multitude of reasons for the new methods Americans have devised to get rid of their money. Naturally, they are interrelated.

Let's begin with the old rich. Quite simply, their prestige has always been closely tied to the ups and downs of the business cycle. With the economy booming, they can now spend as they did in the twenties, without risking public outcry over the injustice of it all. "The rich have been in hiding for twenty years" says an interior designer, who happily adds: "They're coming out of their holes. And they're having a ball." Spencer Samuels, president of an art and antique firm, concurs: "The wealthy no longer worry about what people will think if they spend thousands of dollars on a painting. Being rich has lost its stigma." Meanwhile, it might be noted that the political Left, which used to spend so much time and effort pointing and shaking an accusing finger at the wealthy, hardly has the energy to lift it any more.

BUT DON'T get the idea that it's easy these days to prove wealth without being vulgar about it. Notes *Business Week*:

> In a day when plush cars, swimming pools, boats have become commonplace for the middle-income groups, some of the old prestige symbols have lost their hold. Thus pressure from below, as well as the pressures of their own economic circumstances, lead the wealthy to spend —with more restraint perhaps, but with more skill. . . .

What are the things the poor, pressured old darlings are being forced to buy? *Business Week* lists, among others: Caribbean land (no inheritance taxes there); rare books and manuscripts (a way to tie up capital in small portable objects as a hedge against taxes); jewels ("Diamonds may be a girl's best friend . . . but they are the matron's best investment against a rainy day"); and art ("an owner can give a painting to a museum, get a fat [tax] deduction and keep the picture for most of his life").

The skill and restraint of the spending habits presented on the foregoing list should be breathtakingly obvious to all but the most churlish, as should their potential for tax evasion.

But what about those pressures from below? If the *canaille* is riding around in yachts, where can a man go? Africa? Even Kenya is crowded. The *Wall Street Journal* notes that last year 60,000 people spent over $21 million on African safaris, compared to 13,000 spending only $1.5 million in 1949. It adds that "Photo-hunting is on the rise in Africa. . . . The sport can . . . be inexpensive enough to fit even a middle-income executive's purse."

The rich can't even call their dining habits their own any more. Gourmet foods are an interesting footnote to the new American taste for luxury living. Purveyors of these foods, which once exclusively came to rest on the tables of the rich, have seen their retail dollar volume rise 300 per cent since the war, and sales continue to rise 15 to 20 per cent each year. There are now about 6,000 specialty food stores in the United States, plus around 5,000 specialty shelves in groceries and supermarkets. Here, again, we see business opening the prerogatives of wealth to a large group.

Things are just as bad in the urban clubs, where it used to be possible to observe the power elite in repose. The barbarians are within those portals, too. Says one clubman: "I'd guess about 90 per cent of the checks received by my club are company checks—you'd have to look pretty hard to find a personal check." Adds another: "There are some fine clubs whose old-line members are fast dying off and whose only hope is to recruit promising young men who have made a name for themselves in industry. But the old-timers hesitate —they still cling to the idea that only the bluebloods . . . deserve membership. They fail to see that the so-called social aristocracy has long been on the wane, that the business aristocracy is in the ascendancy."

Reporting all this, the *Wall Street Journal* notes that, with costs up and membership down, the clubs in self-defense are taking in businessmen whose businesses will pay their dues as well as the checks for the business lunches. Increasingly, the clubs are actively seeking the membership of the type who, as one clubman puts it, "will spread his damned papers all over the luncheon table."

THE expense account, of course, is responsible for more than the decline of the old-fashioned club. It is a much-discussed social phenomenon, and we need not pause over-long on it. Its extension and increasing generosity have been caused by a desire to reward executives with non-taxable income—a fact the internal

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Robert Leydenfrost

revenue department has at long last noted. This year you have to report expense account receipts.

Whatever the pros and cons of the expense account, it has had one important psychological effect on vast numbers of people. It has turned them into Cinderellas. Take as an example the husband and wife who spend a week attending a convention in Bermuda at company expense. They note that, by scrimping a bit, they can afford a week or so of similarly high living at their own expense. Obviously, they cannot live every week of the year like millionaires, but they can have a day here, a week there, a few hours at another time, of living virtually indistinguishable from that of the wealthy. In our present economy, they can afford an occasional stop at the gourmet food shop, or a dinner-dancing-theatre evening on the town once a month or so. In short, almost anyone can judiciously sample the good life—the really good life—by shopping carefully, budgeting wisely and having a little luck.

Meanwhile, says the *Wall Street Journal*, "an increasing number of business associations are transferring their conventions to luxury passenger liners"—and 92 per cent of the wives go along for the ride.

FOR THE OLD rich, then, this is the real "pressure from below." Everyone is trying, in some way, to emulate them. American business, ever alert to the national mood, is doing all in its power to make emulation easier—especially since there is now a class that can not only afford, but desperately wants, to engage in this part-time deception. Hence, the credit card, the handy wand that turns pumpkins into rented Rolls-Royces.

The credit-card boom is truly staggering. The Diners' Club started on $20,000 some eight years ago, now bills $91.1 million annually and expects to have 750,000 members this spring, a figure which will undoubtedly be equaled by the relatively new American Express all-purpose credit card. The cards of the Sheraton and Hilton Hotel chains are, meanwhile, coming up fast on the outside. In addition to these, there are literally millions of less diversified cards floating around, ranging from the granddaddies of them all, the oil-company credit cards, to those issued by hotels, railroads, airlines, car rental services and the phone company. There is even a yachting cruise club, on whose card you can charge docking fees, repair bills, ice and gasoline when you are away from your home port. *Newsweek* reports that a member recently called the Diners' Club of New York office to ask if it could "recommend some good places to go slumming."

Plainly, the credit card, the possession of which is in itself a status symbol, represents a major artery down which trickle the prerogatives previously reserved to the wealthy. If what we are witnessing now is the democratization of consumption (or at least the outward signs of it), the credit card is the major manifesto of revolution. *U. S. News & World Report* says:

> The credit-card agencies believe a person is likely to spend more money if he buys with a credit card. One of the companies that issue the cards says that, on the average, people who charge purchases spend about 35 per cent more than those who pay cash.
>
> "It has been found that the charge account purchaser does more impulsive buying," it says. "The individual's tendency to buy an article which strikes his fancy is greater if he does not have to reach into his pocket or purse for cash, but can forget about payment until the end of the month."

The democratization of social values, and to a degree of wealth itself, is making it tough for the rich to keep ahead of the middle class. Even the popular press has shifted its spotlight from them to entertainment and sports figures. So, since there is nothing else for it, they are spending a little more conspicuously than they were previously. But not for them the vulgarity of the Robber Barons! The essence of current conspicuous consumption is the soft-sell—the painting quietly purchased for the local art gallery, the quiet (but not quite anonymous) subsidization of a cultural or charitable organization, a new "responsibility" in political and community affairs, a quietness in entertainment and in home decoration — these are the hallmarks the old wealthy are more and more adopting (viz., the career of Nelson Rockefeller).

Today's burgeoning middle class —the chief beneficiaries of the democratization of consumption—really has no time or inclination toward this sort of modesty. For one thing, their pleasures still have the tang of newness about them; for another, it is at least as difficult to learn how to spend with unobtrusive good taste as it used to be to learn how to spend gaudily. You have to have lived with wealth for a couple of generations before you can, as a class, produce many Rockefellers.

Somehow, observing the current social scene, the famous conversation between F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway, keeps coming to mind. Fitzgerald declared that "The rich are different from you and me," and Hemingway replied, "Yes, they have more money." At the time, Fitzgerald was right, Hemingway merely flip. There were great differences in attitudes, beliefs and behavior between the middle class and the rich. But if uttered today, Hemingway's remark would seem acutely

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perceptive. Increasingly, you can't tell the rich without a tax return.

Any process of democratization results in a blurring of class lines; and that, of course, is what is happening today. Partly, the old rich have only themselves to blame. It is they, when the heat was on, who adopted middle-class plumage as protective coloring. They began leveling down in the thirties. In the fifties, they have been met by the increasingly prosperous middle-class leveling up. Hence, even though the wealthy are coming out of hiding, it remains difficult to spot them. On a Bermuda beach, in duplicate bathing suits, you can't tell a rich girl from an ad-agency secretary on vacation. Things reached such a pass recently that *Esquire* published an only half-kidding chart on "How to Tell a Rich Girl" (she wears plain pumps, is found on the East Side, goes to Europe with her real daddy and wears white underwear).

This leveling down, of course, makes things ever so much easier for all those—and that includes damn near everyone who isn't on relief—intent on poaching the preserves of the wealthy. The only way you can spot them is by the small, satisfied smiles that hover about their lips as they head toward the Metropolitan Club for lunch, the itineraries for their safaris nestling against the sheafs of credit cards in their pockets.

COURAGE, MR. HUXLEY!.. *by L. J. Rather*

AT THE BANQUET terminating the second day of a conference entitled "A Pharmacologic Approach to the Study of the Mind," held at the University of California Medical Center in January, 1959, Aldous Huxley spoke on the potentially revolutionary character of recent developments in the field of "chemical persuasion." These developments, he said, presaged the coming of the "final revolution," since the last step in governmental control and suppression of the individual might now be taken with the aid of "new biochemico-psychological techniques making it possible to act directly on the human organism rather than, as was the case with earlier revolutions, on the environment with a hope of changing behavior indirectly." The guarantee of individual freedom in the past had been the inefficiency of government. By means of technical advances permitting the almost complete control of a populace by a combination of police power and propaganda, modern dictatorships had become possible. In the future we might look forward to "dictatorships without tears," since the use of pharmacologic agents by the central government could easily be carried out so as to insure the degree of tranquillity, euphoria, drive or lethargy appropriate to the ends of the fully technicized state. To quote from another of Huxley's prognostications (in *Brave New World Revisited),* the future dictator "could ensure himself against political unrest by changing the chemistry of his subject's brains and so making them content with their servile condition. He could use tranquillizers to calm the excited, stimulants to arouse enthusiasm in the indifferent, halluciants to distract the attention of the wretched from their miseries."

HUXLEY's quiet charm, graceful urbanity of expression and his sympathetic plea for a coming together of humanistic foxes and scientific hedgehogs—he quoted Archilochus, as recently interpreted by Isaiah Berlin, at this point—did not compensate for his misconstrual of the facts. Not only have social and scientific developments occurred at a rate far exceeding his expectations when he wrote *Brave New World* nearly thirty years ago, but also they have taken a turn which he has failed to grasp. The irony of the situation is that some of the findings reported at the very conference at which he spoke made it clear that a human being's behavior is not so simple and predictable as Huxley's mechanistic determinism leads him to believe. Following in the footsteps of his grandfather, who stated explicitly that human beings were conscious automata, Huxley seems to believe this implicitly. If his speech was already anachronistic when he wrote it, it was doubly so when he gave it.

The essence of control is predictability. We must know what our procedure will bring forth, whether we use force, repetitive propaganda, hypnopaedia, "hidden" or "subconscious" persuasion. Just as there is some evidence that such procedures may fail at times to yield the predicted effects, or may even backfire disastrously and blow the manipulators to the moon, so is there evidence that the "chemical persuaders," the subtly acting hallucinogens, energizers and tranquillizers, do not always do the expected. One of the participants in the conference remarked that the pharmacologist's relationship of dose to effect was in danger of breaking down in such circumstances. The artificial isolation of animals in early behavioral experiments carried out in the Pavlovian tradition, and the accompanying extrusion of social, personal and subjective factors in experiments with human beings, had led to unjustified over-simplification of the facts. Even in rats, the effective dose of amphetamine, an "energizing" drug, decreases as the number of animals confined within the same cage increases. The effect of a drug may be determined by interpersonal and social factors which, at times, are strong enough to override or even reverse the effect of the same drug on an isolated human being.

Anyone with modest powers of attention could have observed this at a cocktail party perhaps, and we might have learned something from

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the notably peculiar behavior of American Indians in response to alcohol in the nineteenth century. (Huxley did point out that Cassio drunk is not Falstaff drunk, but he did not draw the obvious moral.) Findings of this same kind were reported by a psychologist who discussed the paradoxical effects of barbiturates and amphetamine when given in a particular social setting. He worked with pairs of college students who were assigned tasks to perform together. In certain working combinations a student would react as if to the drug the *partner* had taken, rather than to the drug he himself had received. The "pharmacologic" effect was reversed by the "interpersonal" factor. Somewhat similar instances in patients were also described by a psychiatrist participating in the conference. The psychologist humorously suggested that a physician should perhaps himself take the drug whose effect he wished to elicit in his patient.

THE human being is likely to do the unexpected and unpredictable just when he seems finally trapped and pinned down once and for all. Should we be surprised? Huxley compared himself to a rather low-class fox, who knew a great many things superficially, among scientific hedgehogs who knew various kinds of "one big thing." Not all hedgehogs are scientists, however. Huxley mentioned Dante, in passing, as the greatest hedgehog of them all with respect to spiritual insight. Had he read the writings of an equally great hedgehog—Dostoevsky—as assiduously he might have found more sustenance. Says the "spiteful man" in *Notes From Underground*—"Now I ask you: what can be expected of man since he is a being endowed with such strange qualities? Shower upon him every blessing . . . even then out of sheer ingratitude, sheer spite, man would play you some nasty trick. It is just his fantastic dreams, his vulgar folly that he will desire to retain, simply in order to prove to himself—as though that were so necessary—that men still are men and not the keys of a piano, which the laws of nature threaten to control so completely that soon one will be able to desire nothing but by the calendar."*

But then it is not necessary to go so far to discover the paradox inherent in man's attempt to control man. A kind of uncertainty principle of the mind seems to have revealed itself in these experiments with drugs. Who knows whether lysergic acid will induce a state of exaltation or terror? The more subtle the action of a drug on a man the more its effects seem to depend on his whole life setting, his cultural milieu, his changing desires, fears and hopes. Give him a placebo of sugar in place of the expected drug to control hypertension and, instead of remaining unaffected or showing a drop in blood pressure, he may perversely develop a "side-reaction" and vomit. The well-behaved automaton turns out to be a comedian in disguise only masquerading as a dummy. The manipulator appears in a less sinister light and bears a resemblance to the stock character in an old Mack Sennett comedy trying to plug a leaky wall. He carefully closes two leaks with the palms of his hands only to be hit full in the face by a new stream. Huxley's "final revolution" is likely to be betrayed by the creatures who were going to perpetrate it on themselves. Man may yet disappear from the apparently locked room through a trap-door of the spirit. Courage, Huxley, the jig isn't up yet!

**The Short Novels of Dostoevsky*, translated from the Russian by Constance Garnett. New York, Dial Press, 1946.

LETTERS

(*Continued from inside cover*)

is not peddling a thesis, nor does he play God on Judgment Day. I can only thank Mr. Bone for suggesting that Hugh Gloster's *Negro Voices in American Fiction* should be mentioned too. It is indeed an excellent history, but Mr. Hughes' brief survey at the beginning of his book is every bit as informative and valuable as the lengthy treatment of black nationalism and assimilationism that Mr. Bone serves up.

Mr. Bone has completely evaded the major point of my criticism — that his purported history does have a thesis, which is that Negroes should devote their creative efforts to an "autonomous Negro art." A lovely ghetto, I am sure.

. . .

RICHARD GIBSON

New York City

The 'Military Metaphysic'

Dear Sirs: May I take issue with the reasoning in your outspoken editorial [*The Nation*, Feb. 7] against the continuation of Selective Service? You have argued that there is no military reason for extending the draft, and have given as support the fact that in the missile age large armies of men are obsolete. That fact is of course patent, Kissinger notwithstanding. You have also shown, most accurately, that for military control of the nation's economy to continue, large spending on obsolescing military hardware must also continue. But, similarly, don't you agree that continued military control of the nation's *psychology* depends upon large numbers of our young men experiencing direct military service? Otherwise, what might happen to the minds of men at the notoriously idealistic ages of eighteen through twenty-five? Why, they might *change* — they might abandon the "military metaphysic" which today rigidifies minds while yet in high school. And then where would our military forces be? Not only might the nation lose the old faith that provides billions for "defense," but it might lack the few loyal youths necessary to launch missiles.

No, if you want effective military forces at all you have to keep up the draft — keep it up for the best of all military reasons: propaganda. Because once allow the young student's mind to develop for itself and you might have chaotic anarchy. Once allow secondary schools to become anything more than (in Mills' phrase) a training in national stereotypes, once allow colleges to break loose from their alliance with ROTC, and then you might run into dangerous opinions from your lamented "student groups," if not from the teachers.

So unless you want to take the risk of having peaceful coexistence or even world disarmament, you had better start backing Selective Service like all the other liberal organs.

ALLAN BRICK

Hanover, New Hampshire

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Laughter and the Cage

BORSTAL BOY. By Brendan Behan. Alfred A. Knopf. 365 pp. $4.50.

W. S. Merwin

ANYONE acquainted with either of Brendan Behan's plays (*The Quare Fellow* and *The Hostage*) knows that he can write dialogue. The talk conjures up a resounding impression of reality, and does it without recourse to naturalism. In this respect, Behan has been compared to O'Casey, but his lines have a ring to them which could belong to no one but Behan. The language manages to be flat-footed and high-flown at the same time — a thoroughly Irish mixture. It is contemporary without being deadeningly earnest; its irreverence is personal and unbuttoned and totally unreminiscent of the *New Statesman*. It seems to have been sired by exuberance and born of exaggeration, but it's shrewd and sharp, and perfect for the stage, where the virtue of any rhetoric is measured first of all by the vitality and magnetism and immediacy of the illusion it creates.

At the same time, Mr. Behan's weakness, judging from the plays, would seem to be a tendency toward easy-going shapelessness. There is an argument which would say that Behan evinces a perfectly good sense of form, but that it's of a Celtic variety which puts elaboration of the entire texture above the abstract structure of the work. This view is fairly plausible when one is talking about poetry, or tales, or sculpture, or manuscript illumination, but it is not much use when it comes to plays, And for that matter Synge's plays, and those of the young O'Casey, are Celtic enough, yet their organization certainly requires no special apologies. *The Quare Fellow's* peculiar power seems to take hold in spite of the play's scanty dramatic structure rather than because of it, and in *The Hostage* the general diffuseness is nearly complete and it is the incidental hijinks, rather than the play itself, which seize the attention and are remembered. Coming to *Borstal Boy* after the plays, it would be natural to wonder how Behan's gifts and limitations would show up in an autobiography, where truth is supposed to be literal and factual, and where drifting can be quite as fatal as it can on the stage.

But questions of this kind vanish early. Behan set out to write the story of his term in English jails, from his arrest, aged sixteen, as an IRA terrorist, in Liverpool, until the time a few months before his nineteenth birthday, when he arrived back in Ireland after his release. And the clue to his success in telling it is there in the plays: most of the best of his writing is personal, or at least seems so. Long bits out of the plays have the indefinable sound of projected autobiography, and both plays, throughout, are willful, idiosyncratic and subjective, with the author never quite invisible behind his characters, however real they become. The gift for self-revelation is by no means so common as is often supposed, but Behan has it, and the personality he displays, and the story he has to tell, are both worth the candle.

THE story, at least the gist of it, is necessarily simple. When Behan was arrested he had in his possession a suitcase full of high explosives which the police, not unreasonably, concluded were destined for detonation in the Liverpool shipyards, Behan was manhandled into Walton Prison, pending sentence at the assizes, and there he waited two months for trial. Self-pity does not appear to be one of Behan's failings, and his peculiar form of extroverted, ebullient self-delight is candid and winning, balanced as it is with open avowals of the limitations of his own courage and other virtues. The description of the two months in Walton Prison, which occupies nearly half of the book, certainly gives the impression of unexaggerated truth, and a very ugly impression it is.

> All the time it was cold and black. In the morning the slate floor was freezing cold, and over the whole huge wing was a cold smell of urine and bad air, like a refrigerated lavatory.
>
> It seemed to me the English were very strong on washing and cold, but not so much on air and cleanliness. Like the well-tubbed and close-shaven looks of the screws — cruel and foul-spoken, but always precise and orderly.

Accommodation, clothes (shorts, shirt and jacket, in the dead of winter, with no heating), food, smell (of hundreds of chamberpots steaming in the cold, damp, locked-in air) and the general treatment accorded prisoners by most of the prison screws at Walton Prison, unless they have changed drastically in the past fifteen years, must be a disgrace to a country which claims to be civilized. (Not, I am convinced, that the English are any worse in this way than we are.) And British justice did not entirely commend itself to the Irish boy. This first section of the book is haunted by Behan's consciousness of

> . . . the two Irishmen that had been sentenced to death at Birmingham before Christmas. I knew the man that had planted the bomb and it was neither of the men that had been sentenced.

Elsewhere Behan remarks that

> . . . one of them was arrested in London within half an hour of the explosion which happened in Coventry. . . . But that would not matter very much to the English . . . all that would happen would be that the judge would say that all prejudice must be put out of your mind to the jury and after informing the men in the dock that they were getting justice in England the like of which you would get no place else, they would be sentenced to death as they were.

After his own sentence, Behan is taken to one of Her Majesty's Borstal Institutions (reform schools) in the north of England, on the coast. The rest of the book is occupied with the life there, and Behan makes the North Sea Camp sound like The Great Good Place — as, certainly, in contrast to Walton, it must have been. It is an open reformatory: no locks, bolts and bars except for the special punishment cells. One of the most impressive things about the book is the feeling it gives, in recording the two years spent at North Sea Camp, of Behan's growing up, becoming wiser and more tolerant, without suffering any impairment of his convictions.

This impression could not have been given without considerable gifts for the

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W. S. MERWIN is a poet whose work has appeared frequently in these pages. His latest collection of verse is Green With Beasts.

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projection of character, and the characters in the book are as lively and real as the story. Above all, of course, the character of Behan himself, blustering, relishing, telling his story half the time at the top of his voice, scattering language with easy largesse, and making England's Petulant Young Men (with whom he has been compared more than once) seem more nasal, pigeon-chested, and aimlessly self-sorry than ever. He manages to be there in the story twice over, commenting on the action both at the time when he was participating in it, and again, later, when he was writing about it. And the hang of it comes out in dialogue — not only between the characters as Behan recalls them, but between the characters and Behan at the time, and Behan years later. And all without laboring the point:

"You know," said Lavery, in his northern drone, "what they talk about in the dormitories, and you can't go and take a shower but there's some fellows making filthy jokes that you have to listen to. You know," he said very seriously in his mournful Ulster accent, "I can see a joke as well as the next sod."

You could, be Jesus, if it was two feet from your nose and written as high as the neon sign over Larne Harbour, "Welcome to sunny Ulster, the wages of sin is death."

It is all a hell of a joke, and a very serious one, Mr. Behan is saying. And is it all over? Two days ago the newspapers in London told of large sums voted by Parliament for penal reforms, and of the necessity for some little discussion as to just how they would be spent. And this morning the papers are full of an IRA raid on the Kandahar Barracks of the Queen's Own Hussars, in England. The laugh goes on.

'Chicago Is a Wose'

Nelson Algren

Don't you love Shelley? I'm going up on a high mountain and pray to him for forgiveness. — Beatnik promise.

Gimme a pigfoot and a bottle of beer. —Bessie Smith.

IF A MAN wants to pray to a celebrity, that's his privilege. Yet wouldn't you think he'd go to a believing Christian, say to someone like Tennessee Ernie Ford, rather than to one of literature's more furious heretics? Shelley wouldn't listen to God, why would he heed a beatnik? Particularly a Norman-Vincent-Pealenik.

"We've come to save Chicago," one announced recently upon arrival, as though the Salvation Army hadn't been working along those lines here for years. There were three of them, and if any had suffered blows they must have been self-inflicted.

"I've found God," one who plainly had not yet found himself boasted. "I've gone beyond *that*," one yet more devout cut him out. Another tranquillizer, it looked like, and this one might not come back our way at all. He was already in orbit around himself.

I have no personal beef with the Deity. All I say is that if your trade is a trumpet, blow it; if it's painting, paint it; if it's poetry, write a poem with some poetry in it and let the God trade be. Fulton Sheen is taking care of that. Master your delivery the way the Monsignor has mastered his and you can get on television too.

People who are close to God walk the earth of Man. They are people like Louis Armstrong who can make you think, when he plays, "here comes a friend." They are people like Bessie Smith singing "Gimme a pigfoot and a bottle of beer." There's more of God in Bessie's pigfoot than in any pharmaceuticized creep praying for forgiveness to a dead poet. Forgiveness for *what*? For breaking the handle of his sand-pail?

"What is your message?" the trio was asked.

"Fried shoes," one replied promptly. "Meow," another agreed. "Chicago is a wose," the one with the lisp explained of the place of which someone once sang —

This is a great big city
There's a million things to see
But the one I love is missing
And there's no town big enough for me—

being also the place to which Billie Holiday said —

Good Morning, Heartache
Here we go again

Knowing the harm and the heartache, Billie knew Chicago was the loneliest old joint of this very poor old earth, of all cities the most like Man himself, and certainly no damned rose. As she also knew that no one sang true, as no one wrote true, who didn't first feel it for himself. "To write it like a man I must first feel it like a man" holds as true for singers as for writers.

Never before us, someone has noted, has any people enjoyed such a plenitude of physical luxuries while suffering such a dearth of emotional necessities. Never before has any people set itself a moral code so rigid while applying it so flexibly. Now, in gaining an affluence so great that we can afford to support infantilism as a trade followed by professional infants, we score another first.

I believe the beatniks are in aid and comfort of those topless towers whence issue, from time to time, papal bulls announcing that henceforward the American writer will dedicate himself to the amusement and reassurance of the American who has considerable sums invested in our economy. He is to stop biting the hand that feeds him. He will praise piety and chastity and, somewhere between the church and the bank, expose himself as a kind of mutation among men, clown or goofnik or lisping child, alienated from the lives of ordinary men. Hence the applause for the beatnik's tour from *Time*, Inc.

The three unbeatniks who visited here recently were kept under control by local disc jockey Studs Terkel, who opened the program with deft good taste by playing *Dance of the Buffoons* and closed with a voice that came in like a tide, washing away sand-pails, mud-pies and sand-pail cries:

Though lovers be lost
Love shall not
And death shall have no dominion

Leaving this listener wondering what might have happened had some bearded beatnikski appeared on the steps of the Kremlin, genuflected to the powers that are, and announced, "Thalingwad is a wose."

A thought too terrible to pursue.

NELSON ALGREN is the author of The Man With the Golden Arm *and* A Walk on the Wild Side.

On Reading a Collection of Essays on Baudelaire

The maggots bred
in Baudelaire's head
when Paris buzzed in his ear
had no business spinning their queer
cocoon, but can anything
justify that great slow spread of wing
breeding this new surprise
of flies?

GEORGE STARBUCK

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Second Impressions

Review of Paperbacks

Robert M. Wallace

History

Nearly thirty years ago in *The Nation* Samuel Eliot Morison criticized Herbert W. Schneider's *The Puritan Mind* (Michigan-Ann Arbor $1.85) for neglecting economic and social motives. Aside from this limitation the study remains one of the best accounts of basic themes in seventeenth and eighteenth century American puritanism and its adherents. The problem too remains: What are the proper method and scope of history? In 1954, David M. Potter, in *People of Plenty* (Chicago-Phoenix, $1.35) studied the effect of economic abundance on the American character in a context of both history and the behavioral sciences. Insights are sharpened and deepened when the historian's point of vantage is thus shored up. To his lucid and convincing chapters Professor Potter prefaces an explanation of his purpose and his method, which involves the use of psychology, sociology and anthropology as correlative and supporting disciplines to history.

The Philosophy of History in Our Time (Anchor, $1.25), an anthology edited by Hans Meyerhoff, reflects attitudes of this century's historians burdened with a suspicion that their study of man's affairs has not explained man's state as it should. Upon this uneasiness has followed a reassessment of the factors that may be judged crucial in explaining a time, a nation or a man. Professor Meyerhoff, with a thoughtful introduction and linking headnotes, begins with spokesmen for historicism and its emphasis on variable particulars and processes. Impressive groups of essays then take up history as art and science, morality and history, and the meaning of history.

Debates with Historians by Pieter Geyl (Meridian, $1.35) keenly examines the methods and results of Ranke, Toynbee and half a dozen other historians whose work Professor Geyl considers open to question.

The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy by Jacob Burckhardt (Harper Torchbooks, 2 vols., $1.35 ea.), profusely illustrated, contains a substantial new introduction on Burckhardt as a historian by Benjamin Nelson and Charles Trinkaus.

The Triumph of Christendom in the Roman Empire, Chapters XV-XX of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* (Harper Torchbooks, $1.85) begins with his blandly detached account of "second causes" in the rise of Christendom. Here the "secret springs" of particular action reveal what Gibbon took to be general truth.

Roman Imperial Civilization by Harold Mattingly (Anchor, $1.45) corrects points in Gibbon and Mommsen and adds information based on Mr. Mattingly's specialty, numismatics. Illustrated.

Also: *Understanding History* by Bertrand Russell (Wisdom Library, 95c); *Karl Marx: The Red Prussian* by Leopold Schwartzchild (Universal Library, $1.65); *Andrew Jackson: The Border Captain* by Marquis James (Universal Library, $1.45), the first, stronger half of James's biography; *A History of the Jewish People* by Max Margolis and Alexander Marsh (Meridian-Jewish Publication Society, $1.95), comprehensive, authoritative, readable.

Politics

On War by Raymond Aron (Anchor, 95c) seeks a middle ground between peace by terror and nuclear holocaust. Old motives and new technology force us, says Aron, to "survival by moderation" under a "balance of terror," with application of thermonuclear threats growing less frequent as clearer distinctions between types of wars tend to limit violence. He anticipates neither an end of war nor renunciation of atomic weapons. Aron's analysis of policy and prospects in this context is lucid and disturbing. (From *Espoir et peur du siècle.*)

Memoirs of a Revolutionist: Essays in Political Criticism by Dwight Macdonald (Meridian, $1.45) is a lively, personalized collection of analysis, satire and indignation from Mr. Macdonald's contributions to *Politics, Partisan Review* and other journals.

Politics: Who Gets What, When, How by Harold Lasswell with Postcript (1958) (Meridian, $1.35) analyzes methods and returns of the elite whom he identifies as controlling practical politics. Provoking diction, old bibliography.

The Federal Convention and the Formation of the Union. Winton U. Solberg, editor (Liberal Arts Press, American Heritage Series No. 19, $1.75; cloth, $5) is a voluminous, carefully prepared selection of contemporary papers touching on the Constitution, from the Stamp Act Congress to ratification. Fresh scholarly apparatus.

Also: *The Statesman* by Henry Taylor, introduction by C. Northcote Parkinson (Mentor, 50c), caustic wit on personal advancement.

Fiction

St. Mawr and The Man Who Died by D. H. Lawrence (Vintage, 95c) are lesser works, but the *nouvelle* of the great stallion and the long story of the Resurrection are singularly revealing of Lawrence. Compelling mysteries swirl and eddy about the seed horse and his oddly assorted attendants. Reality and a sense of isolation urge themselves upon the reader as Lawrence creates scenes and symbols to his purpose. He is, as in other work, less impressive in several speeches which approximate essays and in awkward epigrams when he makes his thoughts explicit. In *The Man Who Died* Lawrence has the risen Christ learn the nature of "being in touch" and find the joys of a "passionate fecundity" with a young priestess of Isis.

The Folded Leaf by William Maxwell (Vintage, $1.25), exploring adolescents' relationships at home and in college, is now slightly revised from the 1945 original.

The Wings of the Dove (Dell Laurel Editions, 50c), with an excellent introduction by R. P. Blackmur, and *The Golden Bowl* (Evergreen, $1.95) brilliantly complete Henry James's "spiritual trilogy" begun with *The Ambassadors.*

Indian Summer (Everyman, $1.35), William Dean Howells' last international novel, wittily and with gentle satire treats the theme of youth and age, largely in Florence.

Satan in Goray by Isaac Bashevis Singer, Jacob Sloan, translator (Noonday, $1.25) is the haunting Yiddish folk story of how word concerning the false Messiah Sabbatai Zevi affected a seventeenth-century Polish *stetl.*

Also: *Two Years Before the Mast* by Richard Henry Dana, introduction by Mark Van Doren (Bantam Classics, 50c), an exciting contrast to Melville's grander stories; *Roman Tales* by Alberto Moravia (Signet, 35c); *Cannery Row* by John Steinbeck (Bantam Classics, 35c); *Barchester Towers* by Anthony Trollope (Bantam Classics, 50c); *Green Mansions* by W. H. Hudson (Universal Library, 95c).

Miscellaneous

Sketch for a Self Portrait by Bernard Berenson (Indiana-Midland, $1.25) as narrative suffers from a concern with qualities rather than actions and anecdotes, but as casual and sometimes unconsciously deep self-revelation of the great art expert, is colloquially charming. Illustrated.

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The Gothic Image: Religious Art in France of the Thirteenth Century by Emile Mâle (Harper Torchbooks, $1.95), with 190 illustrations, educes the civilization from the art, whose object was to clothe thought in visual forms.

Selected Writings of John Jay Chapman, Jacques Barzun, editor (Anchor, $1.25) represents Chapman's wide, humane, intellectual interests with a biography of William Lloyd Garrison, three essays on the race question, and a dozen others.

Mainsprings of Civilization by Ellsworth Huntington (Mentor, 75c), a substantial interdisciplinary study, attributes decisive effect to heredity, geography and climate.

Modern Woman: The Lost Sex by Ferdinand Lundberg and Marynia F. Farnham (Universal Library, $1.45) views feminism as neurotic searching for masculinity and attributes much of the world's trouble to consequently disturbed relationships and false objectives. Oddly primitivistic.

AT YOUR DRUGGIST'S: *Separate Tables* by Terence Rattigan (Signet, 35c); Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, commentary by Philip Lawrence, and *The Merchant of Venice*, commentary by Morris Carnovsky (Dell, 35c ea.); *Stories from Shakespeare* by Marchette Chute (Mentor, 75c) surpasses the Lambs for reference and sometimes as independent reading; *Cyrano de Bergerac* by Edmond Rostand (Bantam Classics, 35c); *An Outcast of the Islands* by Joseph Conrad (Pyramid, 35c); *Grandfather Stories* by Samuel Hopkins Adams (Signet, 50c).

THEATRE

Harold Clurman

THIS is what I wrote here in 1956 about the production of William Faulkner's *Requiem for a Nun* in Berlin: "When I read the play I was certain that it would be unworkable. Most of it is an exposition, through interminably long speeches, describing highly complex situations which have occurred off-stage. With the help of an excellent company the director has made it absorbing. I am not sure I believe the story or trust either its psychology or its morality, but I cannot deny that the play interested me. There is a concentration, a driving intensity . . . which capture attention."

The play having been produced in most of the great capitals of Europe is now being done here (Golden) where it somehow seems more foreign than it did abroad. The local production is not as arresting as the one in Berlin; our actors seem to lack the density of human quality or the fullness of experience which the European actors possess. And my doubts about the play's morality have mounted to a definite resistance.

But I still found the play compelling. One listens to it with rapt attention, not only because it has some of the fascination of a psychological mystery, a chase after the secret spring of Temple Drake's motivations — she hired a Negro whore and dope addict as her child's nurse, a nurse who finally murders the child — but because one wonders what the author meant to say by his weird story.

The play's plot is the record of a series of sordid deeds, hidden as well as overt violence, anarchy of feeling, an immersion in morbid emotion — and finally a curious act of expiation of a dubious religiosity. The two central characters — the mother and the nurse — climb down to heaven. There is something reminiscent in all this. It resembles the state of mind Europe was in shortly after the war: since everyone felt tainted in some way, cleansing seemed possible only by an admission of one's guilt. The hope was that the evil

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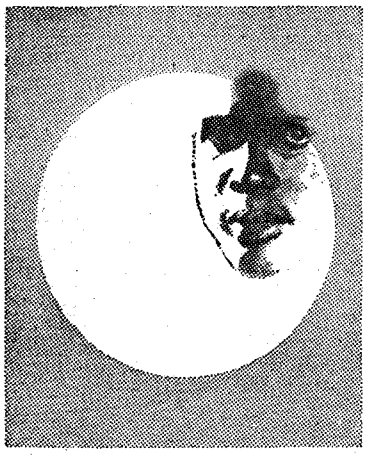

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one had done would serve as a sufficient earnest of one's suffering to merit forgiveness. Sin is a terrible burden and must, when faced, earn some reward akin to the doing of good which carries its own blessing.

Faulkner's play is obsessed by a sense of evil. We have a feeling of being confronted by a race of men who for so long have worn the mask of propriety that it has become unendurable. They deserve the right to besmirch themselves so that on the one hand they may gain some real experience of life and on the other hand learn through contrition something of what might be humanely accounted good. Since respectability has been a spiritually enervating sham, alleviation can only result from a passionate plunge into the dregs.

This state of being is not easily expressed by Americans, who lack a vocabulary for chaotic sentiments. That may be one reason why Faulkner's language, straining to catch the subtlest nuance of contradictory emotion, often seems so tortuous and unnatural. But the general context explains why Europeans have shown greater rapport with the play than we are likely to — even though Faulkner's sources are peculiarly American.

In the final rating one cannot set *Requiem for a Nun* down as an artistically realized play. It is like a graph of a play still to be written. The characters do not speak with their own voices. The author seems to be explaining his characters rather than allowing them to enact their lives. And the morality of the play — that we must "believe," which I take to mean that we must accept life, is a proposition I would not quarrel with in the abstract but which I am certainly indifferent to when posited on the circumstances of this play.

Yet for all its serious shortcomings *Requiem* involved me far more than many a glibber piece: Faulkner is a personality and an artist, whereas what I have seen elsewhere in the theatre this season is for the most part little better than mechanical contrivance.

THE RIVALRY (Bijou) is Norman Corwin's dramatization and staging of the Lincoln-Douglas debate of 1859 in which the central issue was states' rights versus human rights — a theme, needless to say, still relevant.

The text consists of the debate itself as taken down in a stenographic record, though Corwin does not present the passages in their original sequence. There are short interludes of narrative exposition — spoken by Nancy Kelly as Mrs. Douglas — scenes picturing off-the-platform encounters between Lincoln and Douglas, and a few comic interludes based on typical campaign speeches by anonymous electioneers of the period.

In short *The Rivalry* is not a play in the usual sense of the term but I found myself following every moment of the performance with eagerness and pleasure.

Medieval English history for most of us is intimately bound up with our memory of Shakespeare's plays. Those celebrated kings, Richard II, Henry IV *et al.*, are enveloped in our minds by a glamour and glory with which the greatest of English poets endowed them. We ordinarily regard our own history as drab—chiefly, I think, because it has almost never been made vivid for us by true artists. What we rediscover with delight in *The Rivalry* is that men like Lincoln and Douglas spoke better "lines" than most of our dramatists seem able to write. Their speech was rigorous, salty, meaningful and could rise at times to an almost epic grandeur.

The Rivalry is very well done. Martin Gabel as Douglas is particularly effective, not only by virtue of his excellent diction and admirable voice but through a genuine characterization. Richard Boone as Lincoln is best in his quiet moments — we imagine Lincoln a grave rather than an impassioned speaker. Nancy Kelly manifests exemplary simplicity besides being very good-looking in a number of beautiful costumes designed by Motley. The bits too are very nicely acted.

MUSIC

Lester Trimble

ONE OF the most engaging events of the season took place recently at Town Hall when the 63-year-old German composer, Paul Hindemith, appeared there to conduct the United States premières of his *Octette 1958* and *Six Madrigals*, as well as the Bruckner *Mass in E Minor*, one of his present loves among older compositions. Coming almost on the heels of another Town Hall concert in which Robert Craft directed the first New York performance of Stravinsky's *Threni* (*Nation*, Jan. 24), the program inevitably provoked comparisons between the careers and influence of these two immensely gifted composers.

Hindemith's *Octet 1958* is scored for a group composed half of strings and half of woodwinds. It is, I think, too lightly weighted on the soprano side, having only one violin to withstand a large group of basically low instruments — two violas, 'cello, contrabass, bassoon and horn. In a concert hall, this imbalance sometimes becomes critical, and the work then lacks sensuous appeal. But such moments are not frequent. The first movement, exceedingly complicated in its contrapuntal interweavings, places the most severe strain on the medium. In the subsequent four movements, either because the players were warmed up or because the orchestration is more deft, the group sound became more appealing and, indeed, often darkly handsome. The long *Langsam* movement is so masterly in its economy and form, so heartrendingly profound that it must be considered one of our period's important statements. The final movement, a *Fuge und drei alt modische Taenze* (*Walzer, Polka, Galopp*), was a tour de force of contrapuntal and formal art, mixed with plain good humor. The *Octet 1958* is an inspired piece of music.

Six Madrigals were larger than their titles led one to expect, gorgeously smooth and original in their vocal usage, and deeply, sensitively felt. Their poetry was good, the settings were immensely cultivated. My only regret is that Hindemith followed them, not with more of his best music, but with the Bruckner Mass, which I did not find interesting.

BOTH Hindemith and Igor Stravinsky have enjoyed the fullest possible public and artistic success from their youth onward. Stravinsky's career has embodied constant challenge and aesthetic change. Hardly had he finished scandalizing the world with a massive creation like *Le Sacre du Printemps*, than he moved into a neo-classic period, pared down his resources, indulged in certain deliberate eclecticisms, and attempted to tap the sources of dynamism inherent in the rhythmic and contrapuntal practices of Bach. Now, in his seventies, he has adroitly leaped the canyon that previously divided his anti-schematic aesthetic from the rigorously schematic one of the 12-tone school. His *Canticum Sacrum, Agon*, and *Threni* have all, to one or another extent, employed serial techniques devised by that school. But, miraculously, the Stravinsky style has remained recognizable and intact through every change.

Hindemith, by contrast, forged him-

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self a language when he was young, codified it, and went on to compose a tremendous amount of music in a consistent contrapuntal manner. His aesthetic has been that of the master craftsman, delighting in the production of usable and beautiful articles, but not particularly interested in change. He admires utility and instrumental practicality, and he has advocated them to students over a period of thirty years. Oddly, considering the vast difference between his language and that of Stravinsky, Hindemith's prime lineal source has also been Bach.

I THINK that posterity will rank these two men in much the same way we do today — as being qualitatively ahead of most of their contemporaries, with Stravinsky holding the lead. His has been the more searching mind, the more soundly radical and unique. He has put a stamp upon the music of the twentieth century which nothing could efface, and has brought into being some sources of power which did not, except latently, exist before. Hindemith, on the other hand, has followed a more traditional course; continued the techniques and aesthetics of German music as they had evolved from Bach through Beethoven. He has written a huge amount of music with the facility that only a codified technique can provide. But it will always be necessary to cull from this output the pieces that really live and sing. Because many of them are disappointingly dry.

In terms of influence, Hindemith, Stravinsky and the late Arnold Schoenberg have had a deeper effect upon postwar American music than any other European composers. (In the past few years, the music of Anton Webern has been taken up by the young *avant garde* of the United States and Western Europe.) During the years of World War II, when the French pedagogue, Nadia Boulanger, was teaching at Harvard, the Cambridge bent was distinctly toward Stravinsky, whom she reveres. Indeed, there were more little Stravinskys coming out of Cambridge than you could shake a stick at, and I think it is accurate to say that neo-classicism is still a preferred language on the Harvard axis.

During those years, Paul Hindemith was at Yale. From that quarter came an army of crew-cut composers writing in lingua-Hindemithia (fourthy-fifthy counterpoint) and occasionally outdoing their teacher to the point where at least one of them could brag he had used no interval *other* than the fourth or fifth in an entire three-movement sonata. Schoenberg was on the West Coast, at the University of Southern California, and it can be hardly accidental that we now have a thriving twelve-tone colony out there.

Since all three of these men came to the United States to escape turmoil in Europe, we can consider their presence here as one of the benefits of our geography and ideology. With a few others, they have given an impetus and depth to our creative life which make us at present the most musically volatile people in the Western world.

ART

Maurice Grosser

THE GROUP of French drawings assembled from American collections for exhibit last year in Rotterdam and Paris has now returned to this country and is on view at the Metropolitan Museum until March 15. The collection is beautifully selected and comprehensive—more than 200 examples chosen from the work of some eighty painters of the last 400 years — from François Clouet's portrait of Francis II as a spoiled and suspicious boy of ten, done at the middle of the sixteenth century, down to a highly stylized version of a woman's face partly masked by two hands, apparently not her own, by Fernand Lèger in 1952.

In the general high level of quality, certain names and works stick in the mind. Clouet's urbane and civilized faces, for example, contrast with the somber and meditative heads of François Quesnel, done two decades later and already so different in their interior life. The animation of Callot's little figures; the grace and style of Claude Lorrain — (the beautiful drawing of two boats, and the one of an olive tree in a high wind); the economy of the Watteaus are particularly memorable. There are topical scenes by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin and by Jean-Michel Moreau (a comic ballet entrance at a party at court, and a visit of a foreign prince to a painting academy, of the first; and of the second a festival in honor of the Supreme Being in what is now the Champs de Mars). Prud'hon's nudes are embarrassingly sensual: Ingres' pencil portraits surgically immaculate. Daumier's raging irony embodies all the abuses of the law in the figure of one triumphant lawyer descending a court-house stairs. The Seurats are uniformed and mannered, the Picassos restlessly protean. Above all are the unforgettable drawings of Degas, particularly the sketch for a portrait of the painter Tissot, a most elegant young man sprawled at ease in the most elegant tailoring.

If this is not enough, still more such work is to be seen in the neighborhood: the Charles E. Slatkin Gallery will show through March 7 some 160 French drawings of the same quality and covering the same period, with especially fine Claudes, Fragonards, Hubert Roberts, Picassos, Manets and Cézannes.

When we see so many at one time, we discover that painters' drawings come in three quite different kinds. First are the drawings made as ends in themselves or to be elaborated in some other graphic medium. Picasso's late drawings of Greek and mythological subjects, for example, fall into this category, as do the Daumier drawings made for newspaper publication; the Gravelots, which were studies for book illustrations;

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the Fragonards, intended to be engraved as a series of *estampes galantes*; and the Odilon Redons which appear to be sketches for lithographs or etchings. Drawing such as this, made to be shown and sold as drawing, or to be reproduced in one of the drawing-like processes, has great variety. It is highly individualized, since it aims to recall the painter's own work in oil, and closely reflects the stylistic mannerisms of its time.

The second kind of drawing has fewer graces. In this class are studies made to work out the composition of a picture. Such are the drawings by Poussin in which the figures are grouped as static blocks of sculpture all lighted from one side; the water-color drawings of Cézanne — studies in tensions of lines and masses later to be used in pictures; Claude's *Italian Seaport* at the Slatkin Gallery, with its planes of light and shadow brilliantly extemporized in hasty tones of ink; or Monet's one drawing at the Metropolitan show, a sketch for a *Déjeuner sur l'Herbe* where the figures and landscape are indicated only by the roughest kind of penciling.

The third kind is drawings made from nature to be used, instead of nature, in finishing a picture. Here are the drawings by Clouet, Watteau, Degas, Corot, Ingres (made often as an end in themselves but always with the possibility of an oil in mind); de La Fresnaye's band master and Picasso's young horseman, and mother and child. In these drawings made to paint from, individualized style is not important. The painter is interested only in preserving a clear and economical record of the visual facts before him. There is no need or time for added stylistic devices; these will develop automatically in the painting. So that all drawings made to paint from, whether by Clouet, or Degas, Pisanello, Watteau or Pissarro, are alike in manner except for differences of hand; and, except for differences of subject, bear little mark of place or epoch. And it is precisely this avoidance of style which gives the drawings made to paint from the grandest style of all — the style of unassuming mastery.

FORTY early paintings by the late John Marin in water color, oil and pastel, all done before 1920, the painter's fiftieth year, are on view at the Downtown Gallery throughout February. Marin is the most celebrated of the American water-colorists. Since 1909, when he was first shown here by Stieglitz, his reputation has steadily grown. The Museum of Modern Art gave him a retrospective exhibit in 1936, many years before his death, and in its recent historical survey of great American painters the Metropolitan assigned him a major place. His oils have not been universally admired, but he is accepted as the most original, vigorous and inventive of water-colorists. The remarkable flatness of the present show comes as a great surprise.

The subject of these pictures is New York buildings, Paris and Tyrol landscape and the coast of Maine. The more mature work employs a twisting perspective based on a multiple point of view, a perspective system derived, if not directly from Delaunay's teetering views of the Eiffel Tower, at any rate from parallel Futurist sources. This kinetic system, at first applied only to the objects and buildings depicted, is later extended to become the zig-zag grill work so often imposed on the picture itself and the polygonal inner frame which has become a Marin trademark. The painting technique derives from the faceted pencil outlines and fragmented color washes of the Cézanne water-color drawings, but executed in the rapid, slap-dash brushwork and rough, dry paper of Homer, Sargent and the other water-color virtuosi.

THIS lightness of hand in Marin has always been particularly admired, as well as the atmospheric charm of his color. In the pictures here the color is thin and flat. The constant presence of white paper, left uncovered by the water-color washes, grays every tone to a flabby uniformity. The oils, done on the same water-color system with a putty-colored canvas showing through, are dry and without warmth. As for the hand, it is so invariably light as to appear skittish, and the pictures themselves frivolous, mannered and without conviction. Only a very few have forms with enough pictorial interest to be remembered.

All this is very curious. Perhaps Marin's better work of this period was not available or the pictures were not properly selected. It may be that the vigor for which Marin is so well known is paled by the athleticism of our contemporaries, or that his invention suffers in comparison with the skill and variety of the Homer water colors I have so recently seen. Perhaps, as is more likely, Marin was best after fifty. A show of the later pictures, from 1920 to 1953, is promised by the same gallery for a later date. It will be interesting to find out whether this work is as spectacular as one remembers; whether one is remembering the work itself or one of the most spectacular merchandizing campaigns in recent history.

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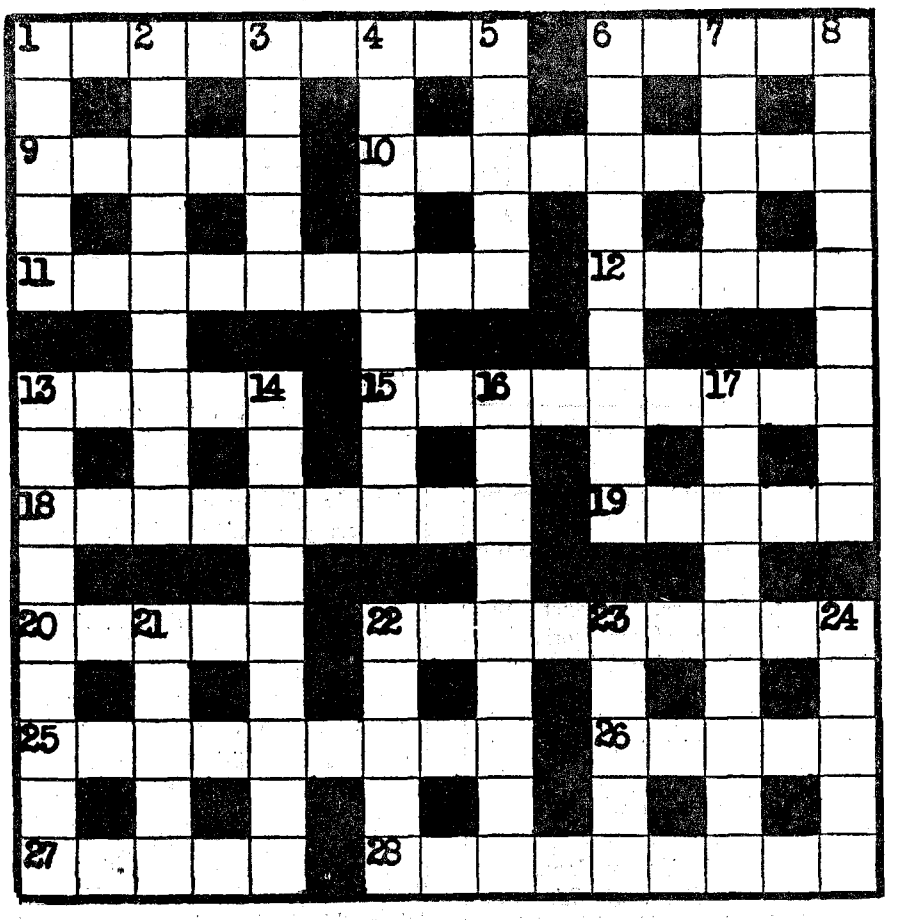
Crossword Puzzle No. 809

By FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS:

1 Grain at a dollar a bushel? (9)
6 Jute has, or gets twisted. (5)
9 Down drain. (5)
10 High-sounding block-buster, similar to a much smaller tremor. (9)
11 A logical place for those litte spats? (9)
12 Supernatural angle? (5)
13 How to get a rise out of the first sign. (5)
15 Astonishing results if you do! (It's rather stupid to institute.) (9)
18 Fish bar in the process of construction? (5,4)
19 Deposits a great deal, by the sound of it. (5)
20 Do-do range? (5)
22 Like the Nautilus, with at least room. (9)
25 Spring quarters—of course in Italy! (9)
26 Perch. (5)
27 Make like a wave! (5)
28 Would Faust give the devil his due, if he did? (Somewhat like Mary's pet, a note from him might be welcome.) (9)

DOWN:

1 A ringer in the minstrel show—keep Amy's sister out of it! (5)
2 Beating taken in a club fight? (9)
3 Becomes interested in fighting, on paper. (5)
4 Embellish or exaggerate. (9)
5 No living quarters for the cat that went to college! (5)
6 None of this ease in Hood's November! (9)
7 Is Hamlet's friend uncalled for, in proportion? (5)
8 Taps, as part of the ceremony associated with the sound of night. (9)
13 Put a couple of articles on a broken leg, thus relieving pain. (9)
14 What poses a problem for labor? It's not so common now. (9)
16 Should one have to, after an air-raid? It's a lie! (9)
17 Four-toned, as the sole position. (9)
21 In case of anemia, might one go south for this? (5)
22 Minced, as one might with capers? (3,2)
23 Lawrence, the diamond receiver? (5)
24 With mine, it would make resolve turn aside. (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 808

ACROSS: 1 Mastiffs; 5 Moored; 9 Norther; 10 Stetson; 11 Automat; 12 Insight; 13 Hunting season; 15 and 2 Seventh inning stretch; 21 Eclipse; 22 Driller; 23 Teacups; 24 Oxidate; 25 Setter; 26 Isolated. DOWN: 1 Manual; 3 Inhuman; 4 First-nighters; 6 Oversee; 7 Resigns; 8 Denoting; 10 Swinging doors; 14 Asbestos; 16 Valiant; 17 Neptune; 18 Initial; 19 Gallant; 20 Friend.

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